

## Incident Within an Incident

### Overview

**This module will focus on the importance of having a plan of action should an incident within an incident occur.**

*After having that evolve, I realized that us firefighters stick together more than I'd thought.*

**Matt Lavigne, Wildland Firefighter, Deer Park Incident**

### Black Canyon Tactical Decision Game



#### Background:

You are a crewmember of a Type II crew from the west that has recently been mobilized to Florida as an initial attack resource during a very hot, dry summer where catastrophic fires are burning much of southern and central Florida. It is 1600 on June 30th and you are working on a burnout on a small, but rapidly growing new start. The name of the incident is Black Canyon and it is currently 24 acres. Half of your crew is running the ignition operation and you are working with the other half that is holding. A tractor-plow has constructed line ahead of the fire, tying it to a road, and your objective is to reinforce the line by burning it out. The burnout is very time sensitive, as the later in the day it gets, the RH climbs rapidly and burnout efforts will be futile. It is expected that if the burnout operation is not completed in a timely manner, that the main fire will overrun the tractor plow line and become another large fire amongst the many others currently burning.

Your crew was put together from local district folks from your forest. Many of you have not worked together before and you are still building cohesion and trust. The crew boss is very experienced, and she has divided everyone into just 2 squads. You are acting as one of the squad bosses. Also on your crew is one EMT.



**Current Conditions:**

**Weather:** clear now, predicted late afternoon thunderstorms

**Wind:** 3-5 mph out of the southwest

**Fuel Model:** 7, Southern Florida Flatwoods, Palmetto, Pine overstory

**Resources Assigned to Fire:**

**IC** – unknown location, no contact

**Tractor/Plow with Tractor/Plow Boss**

**20 person Type II Crew, the Crew Boss is acting as the burn boss**

**Type IV engine on road with three crewmembers**

**Current Situation:**

The burn is progressing well, and so far there hasn't been much work for the holding crew. You move down your piece of line to tie in with one of your experienced crewmembers, who has mentioned a sting or bite to the hand from an unknown insect. He says it's "no big deal" and is focusing on being within a few hours of wrapping up the burnout and catching this fire. You did notice that his hand was beginning to swell a little, but decide that he knows himself well enough and since he isn't worried, you shouldn't be, so you move on with your holding duties.

**\*\*\*DO NOT PROCEED UNTIL DIRECTED TO DO SO BY  
FACILITATOR\*\*\***

### **The Situation: Continued**

Twenty minutes later, you have to go talk to your crewmember again and you inquire about the sting. The swelling is definitely moving up his arm and he is complaining about his throat feeling a little tight, but is still adamant on getting this burn accomplished. You decide to stay with the crewmember to monitor him.

Another 10 minutes goes by and there is noticeable swelling in his face and he is having trouble talking. Your general impression is that he cannot continue working, and needs further medical care. You call up the crew boss to update him of the situation.

The crew boss informs you that he cannot reach the incident commander from his location and that he would like you to be in charge of this medical emergency. Air attack has just returned over head from refueling.

Take a look at the image shown on the screen. You can see the main fire, burnout operations, tractor plow completed lane and resources on scene. The patient is circled in red.



What actions should you take?

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## **Deer Park Chronology of Events**

**August 10, 2010**

**1027-** First medical call is received by fire leadership of an injury on Division C. A brief description is relayed of the injury and victim, and EMT's and various other personnel are dispatched to the location of the victim.

**1030-** Call is received that injury is a possible femur fracture from a rolled boulder, and request for a medivac is relayed to Division C.

**1035-** Squad leader from Flathead IHC established as Incident Commander of medical situation, and EMT's begin to assess and treat the patient.

**1040-** Division C tactical radio frequency is cleared for medical emergency traffic only, and a request for a lifeflight helicopter for patient evacuation is ordered.

**1056-** Message relayed to operations from Lifeflight A, helicopter is spooling up, ETA 28 minutes from scene.

**1100-** Secondary Medivac spot discovered, and Incident Commander established to run Medivac Spot #1 construction.

**1130-** Lifeflight A arrives on scene, and ground personnel are unable to establish communications with helicopter.

**1135-** Lifeflight A lands at Medivac Spot 1, flight nurse exits helicopter, assesses landing zone, and discusses situation with Medivac Spot 1 marshal. Marshal relays that helicopter should remain at full power as victim is minutes away from being loaded. Flight nurse returns and talks to pilot.

**1140-** Lifeflight A shuts down power. As helicopter is spooling down it tips backwards and comes to rest on the bottom of its internal fan tail rotor. Pilot exits helicopter safely.

**1144-** Information is relayed to medical personnel that there has been an issue with the helicopter, and to hold victim in place. Lifeflight medical personnel head towards victim's location.

**1148-** Construction begins on Medivac Spot #2 located 100 yards above victim's location. Lifeflight medical personnel assume command of patient care.

**1224-** Personnel on scene meet and clarify incident organization. Separate individuals are established as Incident Commanders of Helicopter Issue, Medivac Spot #2 construction, patient care, and fire suppression activities in Division C.

**1240-1250-** Personnel stabilize Lifeflight A. Alternate plan to use Helicopter 352 for patient removal from Medivac Spot #2 is established. Construction of Medivac Spot #2 continues.

**1252-** Operations is informed by dispatch that a National Guard hoist capable helicopter is in route to incident.

**1325-1335-** Supplies arrive via slingload at Medivac Spot #1 and Lifeflight A is secured.

**1402-1408-** Medivac Spot #2 is completed. Helicopter 352 flies over and approves Medivac Spot #2. Personnel resume moving patient towards Medivac Spot #2.

**1410-** Helicopter 352 sets down at Medivac Spot #2.

## **Deer Park Chronology of Events (Continued)**

**1415-** National Guard hoist capable helicopter arrives at Deer Park Helibase.

**1417-** Patient arrives at Medivac Spot #2. Patient is loaded with lifeflight medical personnel and fire paramedic. Helicopter 352 departs for Deer Park helibase.

**1450-** Helicopter 352 lands at Deer Park Helibase. Patient and caregivers are transferred to a larger and faster National Guard helicopter to facilitate in-flight medical care. Helicopter departs for Boise St. Alphonsus Trauma Center.

**1730-1830-** Lifeflight B arrives at Medivac Spot #2 with helicopter mechanic. Mechanic assesses Lifeflight A. Smokejumpers, Flathead and Texas Canyon IHC's return Lifeflight A to a level position on the Medivac Spot #1 heli-pad.

**1930-1945-** Lifeflight A conducts run up checks and departs Medivac Spot #1.

### **Recommendations from Lessons Learned (taken from Deer Park Facilitated Learning Analysis)**

- 1. Improve and Standardize Emergency Medical Standards, Training and Equipment.**
- 2. Establish Better Communication Standards with Cooperating Partners.**
- 3. Review Communication Protocols.**
- 4. Emulate Positive Aspects of the Type I Firefighter Program.**
- 5. Distribute Dutch Creek Investigation Report Implementation guidelines more extensively to ground level firefighters and management teams.**



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**Want More Information?**



### **Incident Within an Incident**

- Deer Park Fire Facilitated Learning Analysis
  - [http://www.wildfirelessons.net/documents/Deerpark\\_FLA.pdf](http://www.wildfirelessons.net/documents/Deerpark_FLA.pdf)